

1. Background

The visitor/sabbatical programme is part of a wider EMBL activity (Theory@EMBL) that aims to promote theory-based approaches across EMBL. This includes strengthening existing data-driven and modelling activities, but – importantly – also taking a leap forward and putting emphasis on conceptual theory (deductive approaches, ‘Figure 1 theory’)*.

The programme offers researchers working on theoretical and mathematical modelling aspects of biology the opportunity to apply for financial and organisational support for visits to any of EMBL’s sites. The goal of the programme is to support the initiation or deepening of scientific collaborations, and to connect theory-oriented researchers with cutting-edge molecular biology research, new experiments, data, and experimental research groups.

* More information about Theory@EMBL is available here (coming soon)

2. Sabbatical Visitor Programme Outline

The Theory@EMBL Visitor/Sabbatical Programme will support collaboration of external researchers and EMBL groups by offering **fellowships**. These fellowships are designed to enable the mobility of researchers to all EMBL sites. Several fellowships will be awarded per year for researchers to undertake a visit to EMBL with an expected duration **between three weeks and six months**. Funding is provided for **travel** to EMBL (according to defined travel caps) and associated costs such as **accommodation** (if available, in an EMBL guesthouse; otherwise, support for finding housing and rental costs is provided, see section 4.2 below for details) and **visa** fees.

3. Application and Selection

3.1. Eligibility

Researchers (PIs, Postdoctoral Fellows, staff scientists) are encouraged to apply for a Theory@EMBL Visitor/Sabbatical Programme fellowship. Applicants are expected to hold a PhD or an equivalent qualification. There are no restrictions on age, gender, scientific background or country of origin.

The researcher must remain in employment at their home institution for the duration of the visit to EMBL.

3.2. Application process

Applications must be developed based on mutual agreement between the applying researcher and at least one EMBL Group or Team Leader acting as a **local host**. Projects that link to multiple EMBL groups are highly encouraged.

Applications should present ideas for a potential new collaborations or plans to deepen existing contacts, projects that link to multiple EMBL groups are highly encouraged.

Researchers should ideally provide a **clear timeline** for the visit.

Applications shall be submitted using the supplied [application form](#). Please also make sure to attach your current **CV** including your research experience to your application.

3.3. Timeline

Applications can be submitted for deadlines set every three months (2020 deadlines are 31 March, 30 June, 30 September and 31 December 2020). We recommend that researchers start their visit between 3 and 6 months after the selection of their project to allow sufficient time for making the necessary arrangements for the visit in terms of visa, housing, etc.

3.4. Evaluation process

A selection committee composed of the Theory@EMBL Working Group, comprising representatives from all EMBL sites, will convene to evaluate applications based on the criteria described in 3.2. The Visitor Programme will inform successful applicants of the evaluation by e-mail and provide brief feedback to unsuccessful applicants.

4. Administration of the Fellowships

4.1. Pre-award process

Once a fellowship has been granted, the researcher must inform the host and the Visitor Programme when they intend to undertake the visit. The start should ideally be **within 6 months of the award** of the fellowship. It is the researcher's responsibility to gain the appropriate approvals of their home institution before undertaking the research visit to EMBL. The Visitor Programme will assist the researcher in the organisation of travel, accommodation and the provision of visa-related documentation.

4.2. Budget

4.2.1. Travel costs

The researcher's travel costs will be paid by EMBL **according to defined travel caps** based on the researcher's home institute country. Individual travel costs should not exceed the following limits: Germany 250 €, Europe 450 €, East Coast USA & Canada, China, Israel 1,250 €, West Coast USA & Canada 1,500 €, Rest of the world 2,000 €. The costs of the researcher's travel to EMBL will be covered by EMBL at a rate not exceeding that of the most economic, reasonable and rational means of transport. The researcher's travel costs will be reimbursed via EMBL, and the researcher must therefore provide the Visitor Programme with the original travel receipts for reimbursement.

4.2.2. Associated costs

EMBL will provide financial support towards **accommodation** costs, taking local and EMBL site specific circumstances into account. In addition, costs related to applying for and obtaining required **visas** for the period of the visit will be covered. Additional support in case of justified financial needs (e.g. family support) can be considered. The grants cannot be used to pay for consumables, overheads or salary costs during the visit. Please contact the [Visitor Programme](#) for further information.

4.3. Visiting Status

During the visit, the researcher will be required to officially register as a visitor at EMBL. The [visitor category](#) will be determined according to the EMBL Visitor Programme procedures. The Visitor Programme will assist researchers in registering as a visitor at EMBL and issue a Letter of Agreement for the duration of the visit. The researcher is responsible for completing the necessary documentation and processes.

5. Conditions of the Theory@EMBL fellowships

5.1. General Conditions

The researcher will remain **employed at their home institution** for the duration of the visit. The researcher will abide by the relevant EMBL Rules and Regulations. They will be entitled to the relevant services and administrative support that is customary for visitors at EMBL.

5.2. Results and Reporting

Visitors are expected to present their work at an EMBL public seminar, also aiming at fostering further interactions with EMBL groups.

A brief activity report summarizing the progress in initiating and deepening scientific collaboration with EMBL group(s) shall be submitted at the end of the visit. The report

should also outline, if applicable, the following points related to the visit: progress on a manuscript, review or grant application; development of new research directions; researcher career options leading into or out of EMBL.

5.3. Communication and Acknowledgement

Researchers shall acknowledge the Theory@EMBL Visitor programme in any publication, presentation, poster or other work resulting from the visit and inform the [Visitor Programme](#). The following written acknowledgement is our suggested wording: “This work is supported by a Theory@EMBL Visitor fellowship”. Please use the Theory@EMBL logo in presentations/communications.

Contact

For any questions about this document or Theory@EMBL, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Theory@EMBL working group: wg-theoretical-biology@embl.de

Theory@EMBL working group chairs: [Alexander Aulehla](#), [Wolfgang Huber](#), [Virginie Uhlmann](#)

Web: in progress

Address: Meyerhofstr. 1, 69117 Heidelberg, Germany

Administrative support: [Visitor Programme](#), vp@embl.org